

The Planning Commission for the City of Junction City met on Tuesday, January 29, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City Oregon.

PRESENT WERE: Commissioners, Brad Lemhouse (Chair), Jeff Haag, Jenna Wheeler, Kenneth Weaver, Sandra Dunn, Patricia Phelan and Jason Thiesfeld; Planning Commission Alternate, James Hukill; Planner, Stacy Clauson; and Planning Secretary, Tere Andrews; **ABSENT:** None

I. OPEN MEETING AND REVIEW AGENDA

Chair Lemhouse opened the meeting at 6:31 pm and reviewed the agenda.

II. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Planner Clauson recommended the election be held for Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Commission. She noted ordinarily the elections were held annually in October however they had not yet been held.

Motion: Commissioner Haag made a motion to re-elect Chair Lemhouse. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dunn.

Vote: 7:0:0

Chair Lemhouse, Commissioners Haag, Weaver, Wheeler, Phelan, Dunn and Thiesfeld voted in favor.

Motion: Commissioner Haag made a motion to re-elect Vice-Chair Dunn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weaver.

Vote: 7:0:0

Chair Lemhouse, Commissioners Haag, Weaver, Wheeler, Phelan, Dunn and Thiesfeld voted in favor.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS (FOR ITEMS NOT ALREADY ON THE AGENDA)

There were none.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

●NOVEMBER 20, 2012

●Motion: Commissioner Wheeler made a motion to approve the November 20, 2012 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dunn.

Vote: 7:0:0

Chair Lemhouse, Commissioners, Haag, Weaver, Thiesfeld, Wheeler, Phelan and Dunn voted in favor.

V. PUBLIC HEARING – AMENDMENT TO JUNCTION CITY ZONING ORDINANCE, FILE No. AMD-12-01

A brief review of AMD 12-01 was given by Chair Lemhouse. He reviewed the process and rules of conduct for the public hearing.

Chair Lemhouse opened the public hearing.

He asked the Planning Commission if there were any conflicts of interest.

Commissioner Wheeler stated she had a potential conflict of interest as she owned ducks but would be able to make an impartial decision.

Planner Clauson reviewed proposed code amendments which would allow the keeping of chickens or ducks and bees. The amendments would also set standards for the care and feeding of the animals. Beekeeping would require proof of training and show that neighbors did not object.

Chair Lemhouse asked if Commissioners had questions for Planner Clauson.

There were none.

Testimony

Ms Judy Scher of the Lane County Beekeepers Association, 130 Hansen Lane, Eugene Oregon 97404 and a journeyman beekeeper, stated the practice of keeping a set number of hives was not good management. If there must be a limit on the number of hives a good beekeeper should be allowed to keep four (4) hives on the property in order to control swarms or replace a lost hive.

In winter, when the possibility of a lost hive was greatest, sound practice was to have two (2) strong hives and two (2) half hives or nucleus hives (nuke for short). In the spring the beekeeper could combine the half hive with a weak hive or replace a lost hive. Bees from a strong hive could also be added to the nuke hive which reduced the chance of swarming. The number of hives was not static.

Beekeepers should provide multiple sources of water on the property, away from the hives. Beekeepers should be encouraged but not required to become educated about proper year-round maintenance of their hives.

Beekeepers place their names on 'swarm lists' kept by Lane County and the State. The lists created a pool of beekeepers to remove swarms.

Bee swarms travel up to three (3) miles away, thus they would come from outside of the city limits. Honey bees were not aggressive. In a swarm the honey bee had difficulty

getting into the sting position as they would be full of honey. The most likely person to be stung was the beekeeper.

Ms Scher said honey bees were often confused with aggressive Yellow Jackets, Wasps and Bald-faced Hornets. Yellow Jackets were one of the biggest enemies of Honey Bees. They ate Honey Bees and robbed their hives of honey.

Commissioner Phelan asked if the decline in numbers during the winter was because of swarming.

Ms Scher responded Honey Bees did not generally swarm in the winter. In the winter months the decline was usually due to disease, mites or starvation if there had been too much honey removed from the hive or not enough water. If the hive were too small the bees may not be able to keep themselves warm during the winter.

Commissioner Phelan asked why the Honey Bees swarmed.

Ms Scher responded they swarm in the spring when the queen starts to lay eggs again. They swarm to find a new home.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if the queen went with the swarm.

Ms Sher replied the swarm would take the old queen and the first new queen that emerged would become the queen of the old hive.

Mr. Jamie Hooper, 449 Laurel, Junction City Oregon 97448 stated in terms of fowl one of his neighbors had chickens for awhile and he was unaware of that until recently. He had no objections.

His experience with honey bee hives was that they did not bother him. He noted that when a Honey Bee stung half of its abdomen was torn away and they died. He had no problems with any of the proposed amendments.

Mr. Phil Moffitt, 899 w 17th Avenue, Junction City, Oregon, 97448 said he had been beekeeping for 15 to 20 years. He added he took his grandchildren around the Honey Bee hives to show them what the bees did. Honey bees were of benefit for pollination.

Chair Lemhouse asked Mr. Moffitt his opinion on the proposed requirement for education.

Mr. Moffitt agreed with the requirement.

Ms Madeline Lawson, 235 Birch Street, Junction City Oregon, 97448 spoke in favor of the amendments and noted it was also educational for children. The care of chickens taught children responsibility and an understanding of where food came from.

Chair Lemhouse asked Ms Lawson how she felt about registration.

Ms Lawson was in favor.

Chair Lemhouse asked if there was anyone else who wished to give testimony.

Ms Barb Moffitt, 899 W 17th Avenue, Junction City, Oregon 97448 said they researched other cities in Oregon that allowed the keeping of chickens and bees and found that many other cities did allow them. The chickens provided eggs and ate bugs. The bees pollinated plants and made honey.

As there was no further public comment, Chair Lemhouse closed the public hearing. He opened the discussion amongst the Commissioners. He asked Commissioners about the number of hives.

Commissioner Phelan was in favor of beginning the program with two (2) hives then if the program was successful increasing the number of allowed hives.

Commissioner Haag said the comments from the public hearing and written comments from those educated in keeping of bees recommended four (4) hives. He wanted the audience members to know the Commissioners had in mind a simple, basic beekeeping class nothing extensive but would help new beekeepers be successful.

Commissioner Dunn agreed. She said many people did not understand the difference between bees and wasps. Wasps were aggressive, bees were not. She also felt the education component of the proposed regulations was important.

Chair Lemhouse agreed with a limit of four (4) hives.

There was general consensus from the Planning Commissioners that four (4) hives be allowed.

Mr. Lynn Gillette, 680 W 7th Avenue, said chickens ate spiders, ants, earwigs, pill bugs etc. instead of calling the exterminator get a chicken or two, they would take care of the problem. If slugs and/or snails were an issue, get a couple of ducks. He thanked the Commission.

Chair Lemhouse said he would entertain a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Thiesfeld made a motion to recommend approval of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance as presented in Exhibit A, Attachments 1, 2 and 3. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Haag

Chair Lemhouse asked if there was any additional discussion.

There was not.

Vote: 7:0:0

Chair Lemhouse, Commissioners, Haag, Weaver, Thiesfeld, Wheeler, Phelan and Dunn voted in favor.

VI. PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PLAN

Chair Lemhouse opened the discussion of a Commission work plan.

Planner Clauson reviewed items for possible inclusion in a work plan such as inconsistencies between land uses and Comprehensive Plan designations and a request from the Design subcommittee for revisions to the sign ordinance. The transportation system plan was under review by a subcommittee but would eventually come forward to the Commission for review. Floodplain development continued to be an area where changes were evolving. They may need to play catch up with some changes that were happening at the Federal level to ensure city ordinances were in compliance. She asked for feedback from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Dunn encouraged the Commission to consider changes to the sign code, possibly as one of the first items reviewed.

Chair Lemhouse suggested the items that affected property owners take a higher priority.

Planner Clauson asked if there were any additional items.

Commissioner Thiesfeld suggested they re-visit the wetland regulations down the road.

The Planning Commission held a discussion on the topics to be included in the work plan. The Comprehensive Plan Map/Zoning map inconsistencies and Sign regulations were identified as the top priorities.

Planner Clauson would take the recommendations forward to the City Council.

VII. PLANNING ACTIVITY REPORT

Planner Clauson reviewed the activity report for January 2013.

At their January 15, 2013 meeting the Lane County Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed amendments to the Junction City Comprehensive Plan and Urban Growth Boundary expansion. It next moved forward to the Lane County Board of Commissioners on February 26, 2013. Their public hearing would be held on March 12, 2013.

Chair Lemhouse noted the Board of Commissioners meetings were telecast.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Planner Clauson asked if the Commissioners were interested in a training session at their February, 2013 meeting.

The Commissioners indicated they were.

IX. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Phelan announced the donation containers for Ike, the Junction City police dog, were out.

Commissioner Haag suggested the Planning Commission open their meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion: Commissioner Haag made a motion that the Planning Commission open their meetings with the Pledge of Allegiance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weaver.

Vote: 7:0:0

Chair Lemhouse, Commissioners, Haag, Weaver, Thiesfeld, Wheeler, Phelan and Dunn voted in favor.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Phelan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wheeler.

Vote: 7:0:0

Chair Lemhouse, Commissioners, Haag, Weaver, Thiesfeld, Wheeler, Phelan and Dunn voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting would be Tuesday, February 19, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tere Andrews, Planning Secretary

Brad Lemhouse, Chair